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## WHAT BECOMES OF COLLEGE WOMEN.

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MR. GEORGE WILLIAM CURTIS closed his memorable address at the twenty-fifth anniversary of the foundation of Vassar College with these words : “ We have left woman as a slave with Homer and Pericles. We have left her as a foolish goddess with Chivalry and Don Quixote. We have left her as a toy with Chesterfield and the club; and in the enlightened American daughter, wife, and mother, in the free American home, we find the fairest flower and the highest promise of American civilization.”

The classic phrase of the orator is an expression of a simple fact. That fact is that about fifty-five per cent. of the woman-graduates of our colleges marry. The fact is a happy one—happy for the wives and husbands, and happy also for the homes. For most women prefer to marry. The fears early expressed that the college women would prefer a public to a domestic career, have proved to be false. Women have resigned exalted public places to become heads of simple American homes. The fact that most women prefer to marry is also a happy one for life itself. The home is the center of life; it is the source of life's best influences. No contribution for its enrichment is too costly. All that learning and culture can offer, all that the virtues can achieve, all that the graces can contribute, all that which the college represents and embodies, is none too rich for the betterment of the home. The college woman, therefore, as embodying the best type of womanhood, is bringing the best offering of herself to the worthiest shrine.

Twenty per cent. of all women who become of a marriageable age do not marry, and it is apparent that about forty per cent. of

college women, who have become of a marriageable age, have not married. The question, therefore, is, what work are the unmarried women doing? Are they doing a work of value sufficient to justify the time and money spent in securing an education? Are they doing a work of the highest educational or ethical or civil value?

About 4,000 women are graduates of the principal colleges for women in the United States, and among these principal colleges may be named Vassar, Wellesley, Smith, Bryn Mawr, Radcliffe, Barnard, and the College for Women of Western Reserve University. Besides these colleges there are many co-educational institutions. There are probably another 4,000 women graduates from reputable colleges which are open alike to women and to men. Of this great number of well-trained women it is probable that about 5,000 are at the heads of homes, or will finally find their career to be a domestic one. Of the remaining 3,000 it is to be said at once that they are found engaged in almost every employment.

The most popular, however, of all the fields of work for the college woman is that represented in the school-room. It is probable that at least two-thirds of all college graduates teach for at least a short time after their graduation. Surely no work is more important than teaching in the public or the private school, and no woman is better fitted to do the duties constituting this work than the well-bred and well-trained college woman.\* The American school-room needs good manners, good breeding, instruction beyond the text book and the lesson, and, more than all, it needs culture and sympathy in the teacher. These are needs which the

\* I am indebted for certain facts about the proportion of women who marry to Miss Millicent W. Shinn. But the marriage rate of college women is a very involved question. President Taylor, of Vassar, writes me as follows: "One of the puzzles, it seems to me, in gathering statistics regarding the women's colleges, and especially on the points bearing on graduate work and on marriage, grows out of the fact that women enter into both of these spheres much later than men do oftentimes. That is to say, a young woman teaches very often several years before she undertakes her graduate work. That seems to me much truer in regard to them than in regard to young men, and certainly it is true of marriage, if I have observed with any accuracy, that in estimating the statistics, or the average number of marriages among a body of alumnae, it is unfair and misrepresents the truth to state the matter without regard to the recent graduates, by far the most numerous classes, who are not likely to marry for two or three, and sometimes more, years after their graduation. Of course there are exceptions. We have had a large number of marriages lately among our recent graduates, but after all, the suggestion that I make will hold. . . . I know that in this matter, in which the public seems to be very largely interested, statistics are constantly misleading." So also Miss Mary Caswell, Secretary to the President of Wellesley College, writes me in reference to that college that "the percentage of alumnae who marry is 17½. The estimate is easily made, yet it is in a manner misleading, since in the sum total are included the later and, on the whole, larger classes, which represent possibilities of marriage not yet realized. Taking out the class of 1895, for instance, I get a higher percentage, 19 per cent."

college graduate is best fitted to fill. The public schools in every grade have this need, and it is a happy thing to be able to say that in hundreds and almost thousands of high schools throughout the country are found graduates of our colleges, not only doing the routine work which belongs to the teachers' profession but also contributing to this work the richness of culture and the breadth of sympathy which produce results far more precious than the ordinary routine of educational service. The college woman has not yet gone to a large degree into the schools of the grammar grade; but there are many reasons for believing that the grammar schools and the primary schools are soon to have the advantage of her presence and her work. It will be a happy time for American schools and American life, when every teacher's place is filled by a collegian. The normal school, in certain respects, gives an excellent training, but the best teacher is one who has first had the general training and the culture of the college to which is added the professional training of the best normal school.

It is to be said that women are found, though in less numbers, teaching in the colleges for women as well as in the high schools and other schools. To a slight extent they do teach men in colleges which are open to both men and women. Yet the time is not far distant when we may find women teaching in men's colleges. I was recently approached by one of the most distinguished scholars of the United States, herself a teacher in a conspicuous college for women, asking me in the most gracious way whether, if she accepted a position as teacher in the College for Women of Western Reserve University, she would be allowed to be a teacher in Adelbert College for men, which is a part of the same University? There are in the United States, according to the census of 1890, 735 women who are professors in colleges and universities. A large proportion of these women are to be found in colleges and universities which are hardly of a high collegiate grade, and not a few of them themselves are not graduates of any college, but among them are many eminent scholars, who teach branches as erudite as the highest mathematics and as advanced as the most refined philology.

Of the ten most conspicuous women who are graduates of Vassar College, and of the ten most conspicuous who come from Cornell University and from the University of Michigan, more

than half are teachers in the colleges for women. They hold chairs of social science, of English, of botany, of chemistry, of Greek, of astronomy, of history, and of political science. They are giving to the cause of education, of culture, and of a higher civilization the same contribution which men in similar positions in the colleges for men are giving.

The last census of the United States shows that the number of women who are preachers is now 1,235, who are lawyers 208, and who are physicians and surgeons 4,555; but in these numbers are to be found only a few who are college women. A lamentably small proportion of the physicians of this country are college-bred. Out of the more than 4,000 women who are physicians it is probable that not more than 200 have had a college training. Out of the more than 1,800 women who are members of the Collegiate Alumnae Association are only 34 physicians. The law, the ministry and journalism command a far smaller proportion, for, in the same association of college women, there are only half a dozen lawyers, preachers and journalists.

As one reads over the names of the graduates of the collèges for women of the last twenty-five years he is impressed with the fact that only a few of these women have attained distinction, or have held conspicuous positions. One is reminded of the remark which Sydney Smith, writing in 1810, made, though not with absolute correctness, that up to that time no woman had produced a single notable work either of imagination or reason, in English, German, French or Italian literature. Three quarters of a century after Sydney Smith wrote, Mrs. Fawcett showed that there were at least forty women who had left a permanent mark in English literature alone; and yet, one can not fail to be impressed with the sad and glad fact that so few of college women have become famous. I have recently had an examination made of *Appleton's Cyclopædia of American Biography*\* to discover the nature of the early training and also the character of the employment of the persons therein named. The work contains between fifteen thousand and sixteen thousand names, of which only 633 are names of women. Of these 633 women 320 are authors; seventy-three are singers or actresses; ninety-one are sculptors or painters; sixty-eight are educators; twenty-one may be called philanthropists; fourteen are missionaries; thirteen doctors;

\* The Cyclopædia was published 1886-1889.

twenty-eight may be described as having their places in this article because of heroic deeds. There are also three who are described as engaging in business, one in nursing and one in following the profession of law. Of these 633 persons only nineteen have had a college training ; of the 320 women who are named as authors, only nine are college women ; of the ninety-one artists only one ; of the actresses also one ; of the educators seven ; of the missionaries one only is college-bred. It is evident that the college woman has not become famous. This result is not strange, for the time since the college woman has been at all possible has not been long ; and the time since the college woman has existed as an important part of American life has been very much shorter. Usually longer periods of time are necessary for doing that work of which the result is fame.

The effect of marriage upon the winning of distinction is not so great as first thought would lead one to believe, for of the six hundred and thirty-three women named in *Appleton's Cyclopædia* one-half are married and one-half are unmarried. Some of the most distinguished women of the country have been married, and some women who have not been married have gained hardly greater distinction. Half of the women named in Appleton's work won fame through their books, and it is known that writing is one of those arts that can be carried on at home. The number of women who enter public employments is increasing, and these employments are usually inconsistent with the life of a wife and mother. We therefore shall find an increasing proportion of the distinguished women, who are college graduates, unmarried.

I have recently made two lists, one of the distinguished women who are not graduates and one of distinguished women who are graduates. The two lists manifest a striking difference in that nearly all the distinguished women who are not graduates are distinguished for their writings, and they belong to the older order of women. In the list of graduates I notice that the more distinguished women are distinguished for their work as teachers or scientific investigators. They do, at any rate, represent services to the cause of scholarship of the highest value. They are to be found, these women, as presidents of colleges, at the head of great philanthropic movements, as teachers of history, literature, philology, mathematics, Greek and chemistry. There are

names that suggest erudite thinking in the mathematics and in abstruse scientific investigation, and also in the application of scientific investigation to the problems of practical house-keeping. They and their work represent the high water-mark of our civilization.

But one induction of a nature somewhat startling is made evident. It is that from the great field of literature the college woman has been absent as a creator for the last twenty years. The number of books, of every sort, written by college women is very few. No college woman has yet arisen whose work is to be put into the same class with the works of Miss Wilkins, Miss Murfree, or of Miss Phelps, or of several others whose greatest works have appeared in the time since the first college was opened to women. The American college has given us great scholars, great philanthropists, great administrators, great teachers. It has given us Frances E. Willard and Lucy Stone. It has not given us great writers. It has given us no great novelist. It has given one or two, and only one or two, essayists, and, without doubt, the most conspicuous is Miss Vida Scudder.

It is possible that one may say that the American college for men has not given us great writers. The remark is partially true and partially false. Of the great historians, all, with one exception, are graduates. Of that generation of poets who have helped to render American literature illustrious, all, with the exception of Whittier, are graduates. Some of the greatest essayists are not indeed included in the list, but Emerson is there. Of our novelists, a part, and a part only, are graduates. One does not forget that Howells is not a graduate, neither is Aldrich, but one does not fail to remember that Hawthorne was trained at the college of Longfellow.

But all exceptions aside, it is certainly true that the graduates of the colleges for women have not made that contribution to literature that they have made to scholarship, or to teaching, or to administration. To consider the cause of this condition would carry us too far afield for the present discussion.

It would be somewhat bold in anyone to say who are the most distinguished women of any college; but one who knows the University of Michigan intimately and has known it for years, and another who has had a hardly less intimate acquaintance with Cornell University, send to me the names of ten whom they

regard as the most conspicuous in the history of these two great colleges. In the Michigan University they are as follows:

Dr. E. J. MOSHER, Class of 1875, now an eminent practitioner in Brooklyn, N. Y., who was professor in Vassar College, and for some time had charge of the Massachusetts Prison for Women at South Framingham.

Dr. L. A. HOWARD KING, '76, Tientsin, China. Miss Howard became eminent as a missionary physician by her successful treatment of the wife of the great Viceroy, Li Hung Chang. He became so interested in her work, that, with the aid of some of his mandarins, he erected a hospital and equipped it for her use. She afterwards married an English missionary named King. She did more to introduce Western medicine and surgery into China than almost any other person.

Dr. LUCY HALL BROWN, a practitioner in Brooklyn, New York, and also for some years a Professor in Vassar College. She graduated in 1878.

MARY SHELDON BARNES, '74, wife of Professor Barnes, of Leland Stanford University. She was for some time Professor of History in Wellesley College. She has written historical text books.

ANGIE C. CHAPIN, '75, Professor of Greek in Wellesley College.

ALICE FREEMAN PALMER, the distinguished ex-President of Wellesley College. Graduated in the class of '76.

LUCY M. SALMON, '76, the head of the Department of History in Vassar College.

MARY E. BYRD, '78, Professor of Astronomy, Smith College.

KATHERINE E. COMAN, '80, Professor of History and Political Economy in Wellesley College.

From Cornell graduated the following women:

Mrs. JULIA IRVINE, President of Wellesley College.

MARTHA CAREY THOMAS, who holds the degree of Doctor of Philosophy from Zurich, and is now President of Bryn Mawr College.

RUTH PUTNAM, author of "William the Silent Prince of Orange, the Moderate Man of the XVI. Century."

Mrs. SUSANNA PHELPS GAGE, scientist and illustrator.

Mrs. A. W. SMITH, in 1895 Assistant Professor of Social Science in Leland Stanford University.

EMILY L. GREGORY, Ph. D. (Zurich), Professor of Botany in Barnard College.

Mrs. FLORENCE KELLEY WISCHNEWETZKY, now Chief Inspector of Factories for the State of Illinois, and well-known as an author upon social problems.

Mrs. ANNA BOTSFORD COMSTOCK, entomologist and wood engraver.

KATE MAY EDWARDS, Ph. D., Associate Professor of Greek at Wellesley College.

ELIZA RITCHIE, Ph. D., Instructor in Philosophy at Wellesley College.

Mrs. MILA TUPPER MAYNARD, formerly pastor of churches at La Porte, Ind., and at Grand Rapids, Mich.

Among the most famous graduates of Vassar College, one cannot fail to make mention of Mrs. Ellen H. Richards, connected with the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, who



has for twenty years been an eminent student and teacher in applied chemistry ; of Christine Ladd Franklin, mathematician and logician ; of Mary A. Jordan, Professor in Smith College, and whose services have been a great power in the building up of that popular college ; of Heloise E. Hersey, formerly professor in Smith College, and now at the head of a successful school for girls in Boston ; of Mary Whitney, worthy successor to Maria Mitchell at Vassar ; of Frances Fisher Wood, a physician in New York ; and of Mrs. Elizabeth W. Champney, the author of several popular books.

The record of the graduates of the Bryn Mawr College is one less distinguished than these names just suggested make, for the college was founded in 1885, and no graduate is of a standing longer than six years. But the following facts are most promising of useful and distinguished careers :

Number of A. B.'s to 1895.....	145
Have taken degree of Ph. D.....	2
Have taken degree of A. M.....	10
Engaged in graduate study.....	43
Dean of College.....	1
Lecturers, demonstrators, etc., in colleges.....	11
Private tutors and school teachers.....	35
Secretaries.....	6
Librarians.....	1
Literary workers.....	1
Philanthropic workers.....	3
Married.....	15
Doing no special work.....	52
Dead.....	2

Surely such a record as is herein suggested is tremendously significant. Whether it is better, or not so good a record as men would have permitted the historian to make it is not necessary to say, but this record does represent work which is absolutely worth doing. The result is one of absolute satisfaction to the friend of the cause of college education for women. The American college has helped American women to get strength without becoming priggish, vigor of heart without being cold ; it has helped them to become rich in knowledge without being pedantic, broad in sympathy without wanting a public career, and large-minded and broad-minded without neglecting humble duties. The American college has helped woman toward doing the highest work, by the wisest methods, with the richest results.

CHARLES F. THWING.